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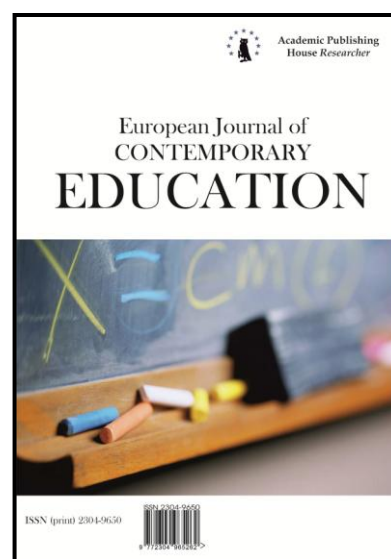
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The History of Education

Teaching of History of 19th century Russia in the Visegrád Group Countries

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Abstract

The study focuses on the content and extent of teaching of Russian history, or history of Russian culture and civilization, in the teaching of history in the states of the Visegrád Group (i.e. in Hungary, the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia). In each of these states, the subject of history (sometimes in different names) has a different status, time subsidy, and content in the framework programs. The study therefore examines the extent to which content and performance standards – concerning the history of Russia in the 19th century – are set out in state educational programs (plans) and their presentation in selected secondary school textbooks. The author comes to the conclusion that the history textbooks in the states of Visegrád Group reflect the basic facts of Russian history of the 19th century, but it is evident that since the 1990s, more and more facts from general history have gradually disappeared in favour of national history. Research shows that the greatest space is devoted to Russian history in secondary school textbooks in the Czech Republic. It is noteworthy that the Polish textbook minimized Russian history at the most, although neutral observers would not have expected it because of the common fates of Poland and Russia. Although the history of 19th century Russia partly disappears from textbooks, on the other hand, history of the 20th century is much more represented, which corresponds to the development of international relations and the situation in Europe.

Keywords: History teaching, Teaching programmes, History of Russia, Absolutism, 19th Century, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland.

1. Introduction

History teaching has in the Visegrád Group countries (Visegrád Four; i.e. Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland) different position in the categorisation of subjects, in time subsidy

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as well as in its content. In Slovakia after the last reform of education system in 2008 teaching of history was minimalised by 50 per cent in time subsidy at the level of elementary schools, and by 75 per cent at the secondary vocational schools (at the grammar schools remained unchanged). So, today at the elementary schools (with 9 years of duration) history is taught for one teaching hour a week between the fifth and eighth level (at the ninth level there are two teaching hours) and at the secondary vocational schools (with 3 or 4 years of duration) there is also only one teaching hour (but only in the first year of study). Teaching of history in the neighbouring countries has more worthy status: on average it is two hours a week at the elementary and secondary schools (in Hungary and Poland it is even three hours a week in some years of study).

In Hungary subject of history is obligatory (not chosen) subject in the final state exams. Naturally, in the content of subject the national or state history dominates and general history – especially non-European – is presented in less detail. In the present study we focus on the comparison of teaching of the Russian history in a „long“ 19th century in separate „national teachings of history“.

Russia became a European power during the 19th century, a strong player in the inter-war European system, despite many shattering events, including defeats in the Crimean War, in the Russo-Japanese War, or the negative impacts of the Berlin Congress. In addition to other significant events in Russian history, the historical facts and their interpretation obviously appear on the pages of the textbooks, especially when they penetrate into themes of national history. It is mainly the case of the Polish history, of course.

2. Materials and methods

In the process of writing this study we have used basic pedagogical documents, as well as selected textbooks from individual Central European countries. Because of the fact that it was not acceptable to select a larger number of titles for the purpose of our study, we have chosen those textbooks that are used most frequently, and this selection was based on the personal experience and contacts with teachers of history. Naturally, we had to take into account the fact that teachers are not only using the approved or recommended textbooks (by the Ministry of Education), but they often use those that are available or suitable for them. It should also be noted that the textbook's structure and content is not binding for the teacher. In Slovakia there are also teachers who do not use textbooks at all, but this is also result of the fact that more than a decade after the collapse of communism textbooks for the grammar schools were not published, and teachers were simply accustomed to teaching even without these didactic materials. We have focused on textbooks for the grammar schools (upper secondary education), because they provide the greatest space for interpretation, in contrast to textbooks for the elementary schools (lower secondary education), but also to most secondary vocational schools.

3. Discussion

The key issue of our study is the question to which extent – in the context of the content and performance standards given by the state educational programs and in the form of selected textbooks – the facts from the 19th century Russian history are presented and discussed. The aim is to compare and to find similarities and differences in the database of facts (events, dates, historical figures) and their interpretations in countries that are close to their geographic location – expressed in the term "Middle East Europe" – that are close to their historical fates (or common history), or similar in starting position of education after the collapse of Communist regimes. In the case of Poles, Czechs and Slovaks there is also the similarity of language, culture and – last but not least – cooperation within the so-called Visegrád Four group.

4. Results

In Slovakia the valid State Educational Program (ŠVP) states in the context of performance standards in the chapter with the title *The Modern Age and Birth of Nationalism* (for a four-year grammar schools¹): the pupil knows/is able to define the social transformations in France from the fall of Bastille to the Vienna Congress, to evaluate the role of the Holy Alliance for Europe, to characterize the industrial revolution, to interpret the causes of the unification process in Germany and Italy, to recognize partial ideologies, and to analyse historical sources from the studied period. The content standards include: Great French Revolution, nation, nation state, Holy Alliance,

Russia, factory, entrepreneur, worker, spring of nations, conservatism, liberalism, nationalism, socialism. This base is further elaborated in textbooks and workbooks. In the Czech Republic, the National Institute for Education issued the Framework Educational Program ([RVP pro základní; RVP pro gymnázia](#)) in which the same theme is formulated in more detailed form than in the Slovak program. Among other topics there is the chapter *Rise of Russia as a Power*. In Hungary and Poland, it is possible to assume that thanks to the higher time subsidy Russian history is presented even in more detail, as we will explain in next paragraphs. Polish history education programs ([Programy nauczania historii](#)) should offer even greater space for teaching, as Russian-Polish history provides considerable material for this.

In the Slovak textbook of history for the 2nd level of the grammar schools ([Bocková et al., 2013](#)), Russia is mentioned first in connection with its role during the Napoleonic Wars (battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon's campaign in 1812, invasion of allied armies to France in the spring of 1814), during the Vienna Congress and the "Concert of the Great Powers", but is also mentioned at the beginning of the Slovak national movement. Authors are stating: *"After the battle of Slavkov, the Slovak population could personally meet the Russians. Part of the Russian army returned to Russia through the Slovak territory and Slovaks became aware of linguistic affinity with the Russians"* ([Bocková et al., 2013: 42](#)). Later Russian victories over Napoleon's troops had a strong influence on the emancipation of Slavic nations in Central Europe. Authors offered the greater space to the issue named *Ideology of Slavic Reciprocity* with its main protagonists Ján Kollár and Pavel Jozef Šafárik and their role in the Slovak National Movement. Reading of the sources (an excerpt from Kollár's text *"O literárnej vzájomnosti medzi kmeňmi a nárečiami slovanskými"* from 1837) is also one of the tasks: *"Explain with arguments why the position of Russia in Europe has been strengthened in that period"* ([Bocková et al., 2013: 43](#)). In the course of the next phases of the Slovak national movement, other Russian motifs appear sporadically. For example there is an excerpt from the travelogue of the Russian Slavophile Vasiliy Panov, written during his journeys in Central and Southeastern Europe between 1841 and 1843, with these formulated questions: *"In what period did Panov describe Slovaks? How did he assess the national question among Slovaks? Who were the Great Russians and Little Russians? What relationship did they [Slovaks] have with Russia?"* ([Bocková et al., 2013: 49](#)). A relatively laconic mention is given of the role of the Russian army in the defeat of the Hungarian Revolutionary Army in August 1849.

The historical development of Russia in the second half of the 19th century is elaborated in a separate chapter with a title *Transformations of Russia* in the range of seven pages. It contains the chronology from the Crimean War (1853–1856) to the reforms of P. Stolypin (1906–1911). The prologue of the chapter starts with these words: *"Russia was actively involved in the defeat of Emperor Napoleon. After the Vienna Congress it was one of Europe's influential powers. In agriculture and production the results were comparable to other powers and, in addition, Russia had the largest army. Engagement of Russia in the Holy Alliance brought the reputation of Europe's gendarme², successes in the war with Iran have made significant gains in the Caucasus, in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia.³ With other war conflicts in Asia Russia conquered the territories in Far East"* ([Bocková et al., 2013: 87](#)). The authors later discuss in more detail the causes and consequences of the Crimean War, economic reforms and the abolition of serfdom, reforms of the state administration, the participation of Russia in the League of the Three Emperors, the anti-reform period during the reign of Alexander III and Nicholas II, Russia's position at the beginning of the 20th century, the Revolution of 1905 and Stolypin's reforms.

The subject is presented with more details in the Czech textbooks. One of the favourite textbooks for the secondary schools (although there were published newer ones⁴) is the textbook of Miroslav Hroch *Dějiny novověku – History of Modern Times* ([Hroch, 1996](#)), one of the most prominent Czech experts for the history of 19th century and especially on the issue of the formation of modern nations. In the chapter *Slow Process of Reforms in Russia* author has characterized the development of Russia since the death of Alexander I and the politics of the tsar Nicholas I, his measures in the field of education, science, secret police, persecution of the opposition; he also distinguished the streams of intelligentsia to Slavophiles and Westernizers). He wrote about the personality of tsar: *"He was a very hardworking and responsible monarch, but he blindly believed that he had a mission from God to build in Russia a well-functioning absolutistic state,"* and *"he considered any Western influences as harmful and Russian proponents of liberalism as criminals."* ([Hroch, 1996: 128](#)). Tsar wanted to protect Russia from "western disease" by isolation.

Some Russian scholars have provided him with the ideological justification in the image of the Russian nation based on the ideas of three principles: the Orthodox faith, absolutism, and the Russian "nationality". The highest values should be devotion to the Orthodox tradition and to the tsar.⁵ The author also analysed the issue of serfdom, the Crimean War, reforms of Alexander II, movement of *Narodnici*, foreign policy, the beginnings of the labour movement and political parties (Social democrats, Cadets, Esers – members of the Socialist Revolutionary Party) and finally the revolution of 1905 and its consequences. In the field of foreign policy, the author emphasized the Russian interests in Afghanistan and the Far East, and he finally stated: "Russian foreign policy has reached a number of successes after the Crimean War. The Russian domination of the Caucasus was strengthened, and the Russian troops successfully penetrated Central Asia and forced local rulers to recognize the sovereignty of the Russian tsar" (Hroch, 1996: 129).

An important part of the textbook is the selection of sources and excerpts from them, so that they can serve the author in a most effective way in relation to the interpretative and visual texts. Naturally, they have not only a demonstrative function, but are also a source for further work, for the development of independent thinking of pupils (Tišliar, 2016: 130). In this case, the author has inserted in the text of the chapter a passage from Alexander II's speech to the group of Moscow nobility in which had declared intention to abolish the serfdom, and the excerpt from Alexander II's letter to German emperor Wilhelm I from 1879 on current international political issues related to the Balkans. Further there are the open letter to tsar written by *Narodnici* from 1881, text of Fyodor Dostoyevsky on the mission of Russia in Asia (1881), and finally the petition of the labourers from January 22, 1905. Miroslav Hroch has not forgotten on the emphasis on national movements in the peripheral parts of the empire, which since 1905 have publicly formulated not only cultural but also political requirements for its ethnic territories (Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belarusians, Ukrainians, Finnish) and the government has slowly retreated from its Rusification policy.

Even this chapter has been concluded by the author in a colour-underlined text, which contains author's own view of the *Alternatives of Russian Development*. He briefly reviewed the possibilities of development in the context of economic growth. He has asked if the strengthening of capitalist enterprise opened up opportunities for overcoming Russia's backwardness and for transforming it into a modern superpower – or, if a non-revolutionary alternative to its modernization was even possible. He pointed to immense differences not only in the living standards, but also to the possibilities of applying fundamental human rights. He pointed to the surviving political oppression, which did not allow to resolve the contradictions of interest on the ground of political struggle. Therefore, according to Hroch, "it cannot be clearly stated that the path of non-violent introduction of liberal and democratic reforms was a real alternative to solving the internal conflicts of tsarist Russia" (Hroch, 1996: 132). Besides other roles of factual nature, the author also commissioned a task in which students would consider arguments for and against the viewpoint – whether for Russia in the second half of the 19th century the absolutism was the only condition for preserving its inner stability and external strength, and whether in such circumstances it was possible to achieve change.

The Czech textbook market has a wider scope also for publishing of alternative textbooks and summaries for graduation purposes of different subjects. One of these teaching materials is also the two-volume monograph *Dějiny evropské civilizace (The History of European Civilization)*, written by a team of authors headed by Pavel Bělina. The book has only an explanatory text without other teaching components. In this textbook Petr Havel, an author of the chapter *Traditional Colonial Powers*, paid attention to the Russian expansion to the South and East. He defined it in intentions of the so-called Pan Slavism "which propagated need of confrontation of races and religions, Slavs and Turks, Christians and Muslims" (*Dějiny evropské civilizace II*, 1997: 159). He stated that in the 19th century the idea of a youthful power of the Slavs and the humanity of Orthodox Christianity was rooted in the Russians. This idea stood against the "rigid" Western culture, the "rotten" Islam and against the Asian powers at the south-eastern border of the Siberian regions.

Positive visions of Slavic ideals also appeared among the Slovaks in the Hungarian Kingdom. In this context, the interesting personality is the Evangelical/Lutheran priest and historian Ludovít Haan from Békecsaba in present Hungary. He was a member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and author publishing mainly in Hungarian language. He was the opponent of the mainstream of the Slovak national movement led by Ludovít Štúr, and the supporter of the double

Slovak-Hungarian identity. In his memoirs written in the 70s of the 19th century he – in the Herderian and Štúrian meaning – expressed his hope concerning the prospective future of the Slavs: “*It will come when the Slavic element fulfills its historical mission, because I am sure that such a mission is waiting for it. The 80 million people were not created by the will of God without aim. They have to play their part in world history. In the ancient times, a Greek element, and then in the Middle Ages Latin element, played a significant role, and now follows a Slavic element. When this latter gets old and plays out its role to the end, then the time will come – but not of nationalism – but the time of humanism through a Christian idea that integrates all peoples*” (Haan, 2006: 11). Haan has refused Hungarian chauvinism and Panslavism as well, but he filtered his publicly-presented attitudes through the social conventions. In terms of his formulated humanist views, he proposed an idealistic vision that in the future the importance of belonging to a specific nationality will cease to exist. If people "without confession" exist, in the future there may be an increase number of people who will not belong to any nationality. People will not "beat" each-other because of their language. He even foresaw that there will probably be one language worldly used that will unite human beings and from this fact there will be no more reasons for disputes and conflicts in the language (or national) issue.⁶

As the main enemy or obstacle for the economic growth of Russia, Petr Havel pointed the Ottoman Empire, especially in the context of the export of agricultural production from Ukraine through the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. Russian interests crossed with the Ottoman as well as with the interests of the smaller Islamic states in Central Asia. According to Havel by "the protection of the Slavic population" Russia demonstrated to itself and to the world the legitimacy of its imperial expansion and masked the purely imperial interests. So Russia has been misusing the Orthodox faith of majority of the Balkan population and was trying to penetrate into the Mediterranean through this territory. Russian activities encountered competition in the interests of the United Kingdom, particularly in Afghanistan, Transcaucasus, and Egypt, and interests of the Austria-Hungarian Empire, Germany and Italy in the Balkans (Dějiny evropské civilizace II, 1997: 159).

In the next section entitled *Preservation of the Traditional System* Havel characterized Russia from an economic, social and political point of view. He described the state of agriculture, in which even after the abolition of serfdom the land ownership persisted in the hands of large landlords. Up to two-thirds of the 21 million of poor farmers were looking for a land or other kind of livelihood, and even the slow-growing industry in the cities did not have enough labour to offer. He also said: “*In the Russian economy relatively large-scale state orders and foreign capital (railway construction, mining development, etc.) were still largely applied, but the economic development was hampered by Russia's overall backwardness and the enormous degree of corruption of state officials*” (Dějiny evropské civilizace II, 1997: 175). According to Havel, the impossibility of economic growth of absolutistic system and the political oppression of government institutions caused the growth of political radicalism whose leaders wanted to push social change through the propagation of revolutionary slogans as well as through the individual terrorism. He described the radical political scene – represented by names such as Bakunin, Nechayev, Lavrov, Herzen, Plechanov, Zaslitschova, he mentioned the culmination of terrorism in the assassinations of General D. Trepov, Chief of Police in Sankt Petersburg, and the tsar Alexander II. Describing the rule of his follower Alexander III he reported on the spread of anti-Jewish sentiments in the country, which culminated in pogroms that literally expelled Russian Jews from the empire (especially to the USA and Palestine). The unsustainability of the regime were also confirmed by the course and end of the Russo-Japanese War, the Massacre on Bloody Sunday, the personality of Gapon, the Revolution of 1905-1907 and its consequences. In a negative connotation he wrote about Stolypin's successor in the office Wladimir Kokovcev as an opponent of any concessions. At the end Havel stated: “*The outbreak of the First World War revealed very quickly the political and economic weakness of the tsarist absolutism*” (Dějiny evropské civilizace II, 1997: 177). Naturally, certain Russian realities appear in teaching materials, where it is necessary – in connection with the development in the Balkans, the emergence of a Dual Alliance, then Triple Alliance, and finally with an account of Russia's economic situation on the eve of the I World War. In the chapter *The Way to the War*, written by Jiří Fidler, there is an emphasis on France's "huge" investment into the Russian economy, which has greatly revived the economic life of the empire, so the Russian industrial production has witnessed dynamic growth. According to Fidler: “*The system of absolutism was transformed into state capitalism, the state owned all the mineral wealth, most*

of the transport infrastructure, and part of the industry, it was also engaged in agriculture. Actually, the state controlled banks and the entire financial system, and by the means of state commissions and loans also the rest of the industry and trade” (Dějiny evropské civilizace II, 1997: 184). The author also highlighted the growth of Russia's military force – compared to the state of army of the times of the Russo-Japanese War and the subsequent Revolution.

In the most recent history textbook for the 8th level of elementary schools after the Napoleonic War period presents Russian realms in the chapter *Eastern Europe and the Balkans*, focusing on three key themes: Russian interests in the Balkans, the rebellion of the Decembrists and the Polish uprisings. There are a number of questions concerning the shorter explanatory text (for example: Why was Russia concerned with the Balkans?; What was the relationship between Russia and Poland after the Vienna Congress?; Why were the uprisings in Poland?; What were their consequences?; What interests had Russia on the Balkan peninsula?). Then it follows the curriculum about the Ottoman Empire and its confrontation with Russia (Válková, 2016: 78-79). In more detail, it describes Russian realities in the second half of the 19th century, from the Crimean War to the revolution of 1905. The text is reflected but also limited by the questions: “How did the relations between Russia and Austria change after the Crimean War? Why did Russia try to penetrate the Balkans? Repeat when the serfdom in the Habsburg monarchy was abolished. How many years later was the serfdom cancelled in Russia? How much is it according to human generations? Why was Alexander II assassinated? What did the assassin promise? What kind of change did it bring? What was the cause of the Russo-Japanese war and how did it end? What were the consequences of the Russo-Japanese war?” (Válková, 2016: 115).

In Hungary, the Research, Education and Development Institute (Oktatás Kutató és Fejlesztő Intézet) is responsible for the valid educational program. On its internet pages the programs for individual subjects according to different types of schools are published. Teaching schedules (Történelem kerettanterv) of the official subject with name "history, social and civic knowledge" (Történelem, társadalmi és állampolgári ismeretek) are designated by the types of elementary schools, grammar schools, secondary vocational schools and schools for pupils with special education needs (Oktatáskutató). The key role have the framework programs for elementary schools (1st - 4th, 5th - 8th year of study), grammar schools (9th - 12th, 7th - 12th and 5th - 12th level) and vocational schools (9th - 12th level), which are always presented for two-year cycles. The educational standards of the subject under our review are comparable and show only minimal differences. The history of the second half of the 19th century is part of the thematic unit *National State and the beginnings of imperial policy* (ranging from 14 to 16 lessons).

Pedagogically binding document always introduces a thematic unit with a range of lessons, further specifies the previous knowledge, educational and developing goals, then the individual topics follow which indicate the educational standards and cross-curricular relations in separate columns. Further within the educational standards there are interpretations of key terms, key concepts defining content standards, followed by 1) personalities, 2) topography (specific locations), and 3) chronology. Finally there are given the expected results. For example in the plan for the 9th and 10th level of the grammar schools there are personalities: Napoleon III, Garibaldi, Cavour, Bismarck, Wilhelm I, Lincoln, Haynau, Alexander Bach, Ferenc Deák, Gyula Andrássy, József Eötvös, Emánuel Löw, Rotschild, Ábrahám Ganz (there is no Russian). In the topography there are mentioned: Piedmont, Solferino, Italy, Königgrätz (Hradec Králové), German Empire, United States of America, Alsace-Lorraine, Sedan, Arad, Austria-Hungary (Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia). In the chronology: 1853–1856 (Crimean War), 1859 (Battle of Solferino), 1861 (the emergence of Italy), 1861–1865 (civil war in the United States), 1866 (battle at Hradec Králové), 1871 (the rise of the German Empire), October 6 1849 (execution of the "national martyrs" in Arad), 1850–1859 (Bach's era), 1865 (Ferenc Deák's *Easter article*), 1867 (Hungarian-Austrian political settlement, Franz Joseph's coronation) 1868 (*National Law*, Croatian-Hungarian political settlement). From this it is clear that for a given period the national history dominates, and in the context of general history data concerning Russia are missing.

But they have found space in textbooks. The theme is chronologically extended to the 11th level, where these historical personalities are given: Ford, Rotschild, Wilhelm II, Queen Victoria, Pope Leo XIII, Teodor (Tivadar) Herz and Lenin (in the cross-curricular relations among the representatives of French literature as Hugo, Apollinaire, Baudelaire, Rimbaud there are also two Russians – Dostoevsky and Leo Tolstoy). The topography includes the Balkans, Serbia, Strait of

Suez, Japan. Chronology contains the following data: 1873 (The League of the Three Emperors), 1878 (Peace in San Stefano, Berlin Congress, Occupation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), 1882 (formation of the Triple Alliance), 1896 (first modern Olympic games), 1907 (formation of the Triple Entente), 1912–1913 (Balkan wars). In the framework program for vocational schools (9th – 12th levels) the standards are essentially overlapping – only a few notions, names, terms are absent. In the programs the facts of Russian history are not clearly mentioned within the thematic unit (with the exception of the Crimean War and Lenin), but they are implicitly present in various themes (the suppression of the revolution in Hungary, the situation in the Balkans, etc.).

Our selected textbook *History 11 for the grammar schools (Történelem 11 gimnáziumokban)* was written by Miklós Száray (Száray, 2011). It consists of five thematic units and the following are the main topics of the general history: 1. *Period of Enlightenment (1714–1849)* and 4. *Period of National States and Empire (1849 – 1914)*. In the first of these, Russian history fills the subchapter with title *Russia's Penetration*. It is reflecting the government of Catherine II, her efforts to conquer Poland and spread the Russian territory southwards to the areas controlled by the weak Ottoman Empire. The text is supplemented by maps, the English caricature of the tsarina, the allegorical picture of the division of Poland and the excerpts from the Catherine II's *Manifesto* from 1772. The depiction of Russian history is presented in the chapter "Government and the fall of Napoleon" (supplemented by the visual sources: painting *Retreat of the Great Army in Russia*, maps and excerpts from the book written by Ségur about the Moscow campaign in 1812). In the curriculum about the European revolutions in 1848 – 1849, the author made a note: "*The peoples of Russia and the Ottoman Empire did not revolt. The power of tsar maintain firm due to the undevelopedness of Russia. That is why Nicholas I had the opportunity to play the role of the European gendarme*" (Száray, 2011: 75). Within the chapter in the special section *Opinions regarding the Slavic Congress in Prague* he stated (and did not avoid generalization) that Slavic nations were far from union. The Poles wanted to regain their independence and therefore stood up against Russia, while the smaller Slavic nations – in the sense of Slavic reciprocity – considered Russia as their patron. In the interpretation of the Hungarian Revolution Száray mentioned the request of Emperor Franz Joseph I, addressed to Nicholas I. It contained the plea for the help against the Hungarian revolutionary movement. Russian tsar – according the goals of the Holy Alliance and from the fear that the Revolution could spread to Poland – provided military assistance in the strength of up to 200,000 men. Undoubtedly, the fear and concern of the tsar was strengthened by the apparent Polish military participation in the Hungarian army, where the highest command posts were held by the Polish Generals Józef Bem and Henryk Dembiński. The last commander of the Revolutionary Army General Artur Görgey surrendered to the Russian army on August 13, 1849, in the village of Világos (today Şiria in Romania). He decided to surrender this way due to the fear of Austrian command – on the other hand Russian military command promised a lenient approach

Part of the 4th thematic unit is the subchapter *Pressure on Russia*, in which the author focused mainly on the events of the Crimean War and the attitude of the Habsburg Empire and the Western Powers to Russia. In the following section, the consequences of Russian defeat, reforms, and regulations which opened the way for capitalist development were discussed. The author did not forget to mention the outbreak of the Warsaw Revolt (1863), which was bloody suppressed by the Russian army. He stressed the growing oppression of the Polish nation: "*The Polish language was expelled from schools and from the Catholic Church, which symbolized the unity of the Poles; they closed the monasteries and took their land*" (Száray, 2011: 170). From the text sources, the interpretation is supplemented by excerpts from the Paris Peace Treaty (1856) and from the abolition of serfdom (1861), during the reign of Alexander II. The Russian history was subsequently reflected in the subchapter *Russian expansion in Asia*. Száray sees the main motivation for Russian expansion in Central Asia in Russia's attempt to restore its international authority after defeat in the Crimean War. He also spoke of a clash with British interests in Afghanistan, the penetration of Russians into China, the acquisition of Vladivostok (1860), the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway, the collision of interests with Japan in Manchuria, leading to the Russo-Japanese war and the "legitimate" Russian defeat. The Russian issue is also focused via selection of sources: from Bismarck's memories of the founding of the League of the Three Emperors, from the articles of the Dual Alliance, from the articles of the Russian-French Treaty (1893), from the Russian-British Agreement (1907), as well as from the statement of the Hungarian Labour leader Leo Frankel about

the "liberation mission" of Russia in the Balkans in favour of its "Christian brothers". Frankel expressed his clear attitude: "*But what is Russia's real intention? Has anyone ever seen that the tyrannical government have started a liberating war for some other nation? Is it possible to believe that such a government as the Russian in Poland, which has allowed the assassination of thousands of people, would support the fighting of other peoples or nations against tyranny?*" – This question was supplemented by another: "*How can his assessment differ from that of then Hungarian people?*" (Szárny, 2011: 205). Within the framework of the chapter on the beginning of social, national and power conflicts, the author dealt in more detail with the Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution in 1905, presenting only two historical figures: Nicholas II and Lenin. The selection from the sources also includes excerpts from Bakunin's *Scientific Anarchism*, Lenin's work *What To Do?* and *Two Tactics of Social Democracy in a Democratic Revolution*, the expression of Danish writer Georges Brandes about the brutal national oppression of Poles (with an obvious emotional background) and the request of Pop Gapon.

The older textbook of Géza Závodszy, used in the 1990s, dealt with the subject in somewhat broader contours (Závodszy, 1994). For example in connection with the Crimean War there is a mention of the important role of the former general of the Hungarian Revolutionary Army, who had the Slovak origin, Juraj Kmeti (György Kmety). He was the commander of the Turkish army under the name Ismail Pasha on the Caucasus Front, and the author expressed that: "*He had attracted European admiration by defending the fort of Kars*" and "*the Sultan had minted commemorative coins to his honour*" (Závodszy, 1994: 169). Author also explains the so-called eastern question in the Balkans, the Russian oppression of the Lithuanians, Poles and Ukrainians (with the excerpt of the Minister of Interior's decree on the prohibition of books in Ukrainian, 1863). It is interesting to note that while unambiguously condemning the national oppression in Russia, in comparison with the Hungarian oppression of the non-Hungarian nationalities the author's addition of the term "mild" is actually downplaying.

In Polish curriculum programs (*Programy nauczania historii*) content and performance standards are listed in the thematic unit, divided into individual themes. For example the theme of January uprising in 1863 contains these content standards: events after the outbreak of the uprising, Rusification and Germanization. As for the education standards, it contains: the pupil can define important events of the January uprising, he/she can find a list of goals in the fight against insurgents, and examples of repression against the population after the defeat of the rebellion. He/she should also explain the consequences of the defeat and struggle for teaching in a Polish language. Of course, important thing is how these educational aims are presented in the textbooks and other methodical materials.

We chose a secondary school textbook called History 2 with the subtitle Modern Times (*Historia 2. Czasy nowożytne*), written by a team of authors. It is still published and used (Burda et al., 2003) and it contains the curriculum in chronological frame spanning from the 16th century to the 1st World War. The first mentions of Russian or Russian-Polish history relating to the 19th century are the Napoleonic Wars, the Vienna Congress, and the formation of the Holy Alliance. Particular attention is paid to the Warsaw Principality and Polish Legions in the Napoleonic Army⁸, another chapter contains the mention of an establishment of the Polish Kingdom which was united with Russia.

The chapter about the *Polish National Liberation Revolts* represents the most important events of the Polish-Russian conflicts in the 19th century (1831–1864). This curriculum is presented in a rather detailed explanatory textbook with rich visual material (mainly maps), taking into account everyday life and culture until the revolution of 1905. Among its results were release of oppression, formation of the cultural organizations and lower Polish schools with teaching in the mother language. The text of the textbook allows pupils to compare the Rusification in the Russian part of Poland with the Germanisation in the in Prussian (German) part, while the interpretation itself can be evaluated as essentially neutral and without emotional elements (Burda et al., 2003: 383-386).

Surprisingly, textbook does not contain a special chapter characterizing the development of Russia in the second half of the 19th century. Russian history is explained in the Polish-Russian context, except for a few exceptions in the range of a few paragraphs. They reflect the Russian disasters in Asia, problem in the Balkans, changes in Russia's international status (formation of the Dual Alliance), the development towards the revolution of 1905 and the Russo-Japanese War.

The subject, even in direct connection with the national oppression of the Poles, is given in a more or less unemotional tone. Definitely, text is not as emotional as it was common in the Polish textbooks published before the Second World War. At that time, the crimes, various ways of reprisal, prison and death sentences, expulsion to Siberia, confiscation of property, persecution of the Catholic Church, and violent Rusification were highlighted in the textbooks. The personalities of the Russian state were characterized as explicitly negative, for example the Grand Duke Konstantin was described with such epithets as a cruel and moody man, violent and bloodthirsty despot. The representatives of the military apparatus – like Generals Paskievich and Dybich – were evaluated not from the military point of view but as the murderers (Sanojca, 2003: 91-95, 102-103).

In other Polish textbooks, Russian history is also presented in separate chapters or subchapters, which, of course, is related to the author's layout of the teaching material. For example in the textbook of Halina Tomalska for the secondary vocational schools (Tomalska, 1996), Russian history is explicitly mentioned in the names of chapters as *The Balkan regions and Russia in the years 1815-1830*, *The Polish-Russian war and the end of the uprising*, *Russia at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries*. Other facts are included in the chapters with description of the Russian-Polish relations. The extensive chapters on Russia can be found in a secondary school textbook written by Waldemar Łazuga (Łazuga, 1996), for example the chapter with a short title *Russia* in which the author dealt with the Russian history from the Vienna Congress to the Crimean War. The selection of personalities is represented by the following names: Alexander I, Aleksey Arakcheyev, Nicholas I, Pavel Pestel, Peter Chaadayev, Aksakov brothers, Vissarion Belinsky, Ivan Turgenev, Michail Dostoyevsky, Alexander II. The list is much wider than in the newer textbooks, not to mention the state education programs.

5. Conclusion

In the process of teaching history, it is very important to find a fair and realistic balance between acquiring historical knowledge, developing the ability to critically analyse, interpret and evaluate historical sources, and finally developing a sense for history. In this aims, textbooks have an irreplaceable role. Undoubtedly, the textbooks of the countries united in the Visegrád Group reflect the basic fact of Russian history of the 19th century, but it is clear that number of facts concerning the general history is gradually decreasing since the 1990s. It is clear that this decrease is making a place for the facts from national history. Supporting of common European history teaching, remarkable in the 1990s and first years of 21st century, is no longer preferred. Historians agree that, in principle, no universal model of European history can be applied, model which would be absolutely acceptable to all European countries because it would not take into account the different historical experience and mentality of the populations in various countries. The failures of a joint French-German or Hungarian-Slovak history textbooks are the examples of this attempt. The content of Russian history basically corresponds to the time subsidy and content standards in an increasing trend to boost the share of national history. The greatest space devoted to Russian history is in the secondary school history textbooks in the Czech Republic. Interestingly, the Polish textbook *Historia 2* minimized Russian history, what could be seen as the result of the common fates of Poland and Russia in the Modern period. Although the history of Russia in the 19th century partly disappears from textbooks, on the other hand, in the history of the 20th century is much more represented, which corresponds to the development of international relations and the situation in Europe.

Notes

¹ These grammar schools represent institutions in which the history of Slovakia has a fairly wide space in the form of 2 hours a week for three school years, and with the possibility of an optional seminar on history (2 hours a week for one or two years).

² In the Czech monograph *Dějiny Ruska (History of Russia)*, written by a team of authors, this fact is commented: “For its role as “the gendarme of Europe,” the Russian Empire was not brought by the differences in civilization, culture or ideology of Russia and Europe, but by the fact that since the end of the 18th century European development has permanently endangered the foundations of its existence. But it was true also in the opposite way” (Švankmajer et al., 1995: 244).

³ In the subsequent text of a textbook (Bocková et al., 2013: 87-92) to the border regions of Russia – for example Caucasus, Transcaucasia, Middle Asia and so on – no space is given. These

regions were conquered by Russia during the 19th century and from the historical point of view very interesting is the conquest of multiethnic and multicultural Caucasus region (the newest outputs of research are remarkable – see for example: Cherkasov et al., 2014).

⁴We mean the newest textbooks from 2013–2016 (Hroch, Ulvr, 2013; Bolom-Kotari et al., 2016; Čornej et al., 2016). Facts in textbooks do not differ significantly; some differences are in the range of content. The textbook very rich in details is *Dějepis 19. století pro střední školy*, which is designed above the standard framework program (Russian history is presented in chapters: *Rusko a východná Európa v prvej polovici 19. storočia* and *Východná Európa a Balkán od 50. rokov 19. storočia*) (Bolom-Kotari et al., 2016: 61-63, 98-100). But it is disputable, for example, whether it is useful for the Czech students to know the nine names of the Russian Slavophiles and Westernizers.

⁵In this area this was reflected in the reforms of Russian education in the second half of the 19th century (see: Cherkasov, Smigel', 2016: 420-422).

⁶L. Haan wrote: “The better the means of transport will be created and improved – which in my opinion will lead to travel in the air – the more obstacles formed by mountains, rivers among the countries and nations will disappear. Nationalism also disappears and global humanism starts to dominate. If today it seems strange to us that people have had murderous wars against each other due to different religions, our grandchildren will laugh for our reverie about nationality, for which we have hated each other and for which we have turned against each other. These times, of course, come very late, after many centuries” (Haan, 2006: 11).

⁷It is necessary to add that together with abolition of serfdom in Russia (in 1861; but in some distant parts of Empire only in 1917) the slavery was also cancelled in the conquered region of Caucasus – it started in the Caucasian territory of the Black Sea coast after the end of the Caucasian war in 1864 (Smigel', Cherkasov, 2016: 1191-1192).

⁸Slovaks and other Slavs among the prisoners of the Austrian army were also recruited to the army. In Slovakia Ján Ignaty from Klenovec is famous warrior, who entered Napoleonic Army in 1808 and wrote in his interesting memoirs about his military activities in Spain.

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